SCRIPT BITS!
Issue: Sonic the Hedgehog #162 (MAY'06)
Pages: 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11

Welcome one and all to **Script Bits!** This monthly feature will take roughly forty-five percent of a story in Archie Comic's *Sonic the Hedgehog* and present it to you as insight into the writing process.

Part of the fun of this feature will be comparing what was written and what saw print. Sometimes the vision is tweaked as the artists interpret the script. Sometimes the original idea doesn't work once put on paper and must be adjusted from there. Sometimes the artist has a stroke of genius and does something different than what the script calls for - and it's for the better!

So pull out your copy of *Sonic the Hedgehog* #162 from May of 2006 and get ready to read along!

Remembering "The Darkest Storm" part one

It's been a long, hard road to bring us to "The Gathering Tempest." Join me as I recall the creative process each month that took us from a raw concept to the "summer blockbuster" we received.

"TDS" went through a very rocky revision process. Key elements made it through, but it began as a very different story. In the original pitch, Sir Connery died within the first few pages and sent a magical posthumous warning to the Freedom Fighters via the Sword of Light.

The scene in the Egg Vineyard was more or less the same, but the results were totally different. The rip in the Zone of Silence appeared over Knothole, dumping Ixis Naugus and Tig Stripe into the midst of our heroes. That's right – Tig Stripe was to return. This was due to the surprising show of interest from the fans. The rest of the Original Freedom Fighters didn't receive nearly as much response in letters or fanart as Tig did. In later revisions, however, it was deemed that Tig's return wasn't really doing much for the world we were working with now. He had served his purpose in his two-part story and remained lost to the Zone of Silence. That, and part of the purpose to "TDS" was to clean out the roster some. Tig Stripe's return would've been counter-productive to that end.

Naugus was to then be "kidnapped" by Mogul to an undefined area where they would duel and, ultimately, have Naugus come into Mogul's service. The story would move on to have Croctobot and Octobot (separate at the time) mounting a land/sea attack on Knothole, the remnants of Operation: Wasteland invading, Shadow fighting on the heroes' side, and Dr. Finitevus stealing/destroying the Crown and Sword of Acorns.

This, in turn, was all culled from an even earlier storyline. Yes, there were even more elements wedged into sixteen pages each month. No, it was not a good idea. Mike and I went through the pitch page by page, element by element, and disassembled the mess. It was then my job to take my pieces and build a better book out of it. A few revisions later and we arrived where we are now.

Something that was introduced from the very beginning was the triptych covers. I always loved the effect in the *Knuckles the Echidna* book and wanted to see it return in some form. Mike liked the idea enough to pass it along to Pat Spaziante who went on to create the visual delight you all have picked up.

"The Gathering Tempest" had to get us set up for the major events which required a number of plots and sub-plots starting or continuing – sometimes from long ago. To keep things flowing and somewhat contained we introduced the Anonymous narration. As we jumped from location to location, plot to plot, Anonymous was there to introduce us to the key element, hopefully easing the transitions.

One of the fun things of this story is I got to use an old, old fan-concept. Years ago, before I was even aware of the mysterious "internet," I had created a band of anti-Chaotix. I forget all the species and names of the group, but the name stuck with me and was reused each time I concocted a new anti-Chaotix team. With the Fearsome Foursome now filled out to six, and with all the other villainous six-themed team names taken, it was the perfect time to pull "The Destructix" out from the dusty closet of my mind. Who would've thought, eh?

I did the best I could to accommodate the request on This Side of Mobius and only had to drop one requested page. (That requestor gets three out of four requested pages, so I think it's fair). We have . . .

- The big introduction by Anonymous
- The reunion of half the Prower clan
- The big Destructix / Freedom Fighter brawl
- Sally's explanation of the Source of All
- And Dr. Eggman's first scene with M and A.D.A.M.

If you're looking for the section about "Ties That Bind," it begins after the script selections from "The Gathering Tempest."

THE DARKEST STORM - PART ONE

16 pages

PGS: 16
D.O.S.: 5/25/05
CODE#:
C.C.:

NOTE ABOUT THE SCRIPT:

There are a number of color switches going on, especially with text boxes. I've tried to keep it clear in the script - but artists - please help each other out and mark the boxes and other instances where I do, just to make sure we're all thinking the same way. Thank you ahead of tiem!

PAGE ONE

Splash Panel: The page is composed of three scenes with a vague representation of ANONYMOUS in the center. ANONYMOUS should look something like the silhouette of classic Dr. Robotnik (S#50). It should be clear enough to make us wonder, but also vague enough that we can't say it has a true physical form.
The three other scenes encircle ANONYMOUS and are broken into even thirds. Keep them all within a circle (meant to be a hidden symbol of ADAM's "eye"). Make sure these

scenes keep within the copy-safe area. Sacrifice background themes if you have to - the focus here is our heroes against the villains.

INSET ONE - top third: SONIC and TAILS race about doing battle with DR. EGGMAN. You don't need to re-enact a certain moment from the comic or games - this is meant to be a representation of the classic, basic struggle of the book.

INSET TWO - bottom-left third: SONIC and TAILS in the immediate foreground as they stare down IXIS NAUGUS. If you can fit in any scenery, gives us a generic castle scene with multiple magic rings floating about. (see: S#64-66)

INSET THREE - bottom-right third: SONIC and TAILS stare-down MAMMOTH MOGUL. Go with his original leisure suit (Super Sonic Special #1). Where NAGUS and EGGMAN are flamboyantly evil in their scenes, give MOGUL a more subtle, controlled villainous look.

In the bottom-left corner we get the title. Credits in a small section bar across the bottom:

TITLE:
THE DARKEST STORM
PART ONE: THE GATHERING TEMPEST

CREDITS
Writer: IAN "POTTO" FLYNN
Pencils:
Inks:
Colors:
Letters:
Editor: MIKE PELLERITO
Managing Editor: VICTOR GORELICK
Editor-in-Chief: RICHARD GOLDWATER
Special thanks to: _____ at Sega Licensing

TEXT BOX (top left corner - green - Anonymous)
I have learned everything about SONIC THE HEDGEHOG.

TEXT BOX (stair-step descending from previous - green - Anonymous)
I have know of every battle and villain he has faced.

TEXT BOX (stair-step descending from previous - green - Anonymous)
Of all his foes, his deadliest have been . . .

TEXT BOX (above INSET ONE, completing the "stairs" - green - Anonymous)
Dr. Ivo "Eggman" Robotnik

TEXT BOX (to the left of INSET TWO - green - Anonymous)

Ixis Naugus

TEXT BOX (to the right of INSET THREE - green - Anonymous)
and Mammoth Mogul.

TEXT BOX (stair-step descending to bottom right corner - green - Anonymous)
Each a threat - but are now **outdated.**

TEXT BOX (stair-step descending to bottom right corner - green - Anonymous)
I am the new force that will dispose of them **and** Sonic.

TEXT BOX (bottom right corner - green - Anonymous)
I am called **Anonymous.**

PAGE THREE

PANEL 1: MERLIN PROWER (see Sonic Live! Special)and SIR CONNERY (see S#45) stand in the doorway to the Brain Trust HQ. Both wear weary, amiable smiles. Note that CONNERY should stand about a head taller than MERLIN and look physically imposing. He's a knight after all - in the classic "swing sword and kill things" sort of way.

MERLIN
Your uncle, Chosen One.
I am **Merlin Prower.**

PANEL 2: TAILS hops down from his stool, unsure on how to react. He's heard he has an uncle but has never met him before. TAILS takes center, background. MERLIN can be seen to the right-foreground smiling bitter-sweetly.

TAILS
R-Really? Athair told me about you* . . . but . . .
I never thought I'd get to . . . I've never had . . .

MERLIN
I know, Miles.
I'm sorry I've been kept away from you for so long.

EDITOR'S NOTE (small and to a bottom corner)
* S#149

PANEL 3: MERLIN stoops to hug TAILS, who eagerly embraces him with happy tears. No need for a background to distract us from this moment.

MERLIN
I am here now, though, and I promise to help rebuild our family.

TAILS
I'm just happy to finally have somebody back!

PANEL 4: They break apart and MERLIN begins to reach into his sleeve. We see SIR CONNERY looking back out the door, looking concerned. He holds the hilt of his sword tightly. TAILS wipes tears away, still smiling.

MERLIN
I wish we had more time, but I'm afraid I must speak with the king right away.

TAILS
>sniff<
It's okay, as long as you promise to stay.
What do you need to see the king for?

PANEL 5: TAILS's head gets the extreme left-foreground. The PANEL is dominated by MERLIN's hand and the Chaos Emerald it holds. Within, we can see the nebulous form of MAMMOTH MOGUL sitting in a lotus position. The emerald shines, giving everything a green tint.

MERLIN
He holds part of the key to saving the **Ancient Walkers** . . .
And to keeping **him** safely trapped.

TAILS
Mammoth Mogul!*

EDTIOR'S ACTION
S#150

<u>PAGE FOUR</u>

PANEL 1: The Egg Grape chamber (see S# 141) We're at the top of the cylindrical shaft that holds hundreds of Egg Grapes - the round, glassy pods. Inside them we can see vague shapes of Echidnas (mostly) Dark Legionaries (some) and random other Mobians (few). DR. EGGMAN stands on the catwalk that rings the room and leans against the railing, smiling in wicked glee. MECHA stands stiffly at his side. ADAM is represented by a screen in the wall, just at the edge of the catwalk. The screen shows a softly-glowing green circle. Think HAL-2000 from "2001 A Space Odyssey." We're looking down from about 3/4ths over-head.

TEXT BOX: (green - Anonymous)
As the Mobians try to rebuild . . .

TEXT BOX: (green - Anonymous)
Dr. Eggman quickly works to destroy.

ADAM: (green, square bubble with static tail)
I have an update for you, father.

EGGMAN
Give daddy some good news, A.D.A.M!

ADAM
Your Egg Grapes are nearly complete.
Sensors read 99% biofield-deletion.

EGGMAN (slightly larger font)
Fantastic!

PANEL 2: Close on DR. EGGMAN as he clasps his hands to the side of his head and is giddy as a schoolgirl. MECHA looks over to him and arches one eyebrow. ADAM can be seen between them.

MECHA
Father?

EGGMAN
You see M, this means I can soon move on to my next phase!

PANEL 3: Worm's-eye-view from within the chamber. We're looking up amid the Egg Grapes to see DR. EGGMAN almost lurching over the railing as he gestures eagerly. Sneak in a close-up of some poor echidna in an Egg Grape for added creepy-factor.

EGGMAN
Once the erasures are complete, I will syphon power out of the **Zone of Silence,** purifying it through the Egg Grapes, giving me the raw energy of an entire **dimension!**

PANEL 4: We're back on the catwalk. MECHA continues her stiff, questioning look. ADAM can be seen again. Not much you can do with just the screen. EGGMAN's back is to us.

MECHA
Why drain the the Mobians?

EGGMAN
So that their empty husks will act as a kind of filter!

MECHA
Is there not a more efficient way? Can you not reach your vision with a quicker way?

EGGMAN
Oh, I'm sure I can . . .

PANEL 5: Close-up on EGGMAN's smiling, villainous face. This PANEL alone must tell us visually just how horribly despicable this man truly is.

EGGMAN
But where would the **fun** in that be?

PAGE FIVE

PANEL 1: EGGMAN turns to MECHA and ADAM. MECHA offers a very small smile.

MECHA
Very good, father.

EGGMAN
I thought so.
A.D.A.M.!

ADAM: (green, square bubble with static tail)
Yes, father?

PANEL 2: EGGMAN leans over to look directly into the green glow of ADAM's screen. Don't worry if this looks goofy - that's Eggman's charm: ridiculous but threatening all in one.

EGGMAN
Tell me you have identified the individual who called himself **"Anonymous."***

ADAM (green, square bubble with static tail)
I am afraid not, father.
I am indescribably sorry.

EGGMAN
Then redouble your searching efforts!

ADAM (green, square bubble with static tail)
Yes father.

EDITOR'S NOTE
*S#135

PANEL 3: Long and tall PANEL. Give yourself plenty of room. EGGMAN is to the left of the PANEL, hands clasped behind his back as he broods. To the right we get a pair of flash-back scenes.

INSET ONE: on top - EGGMAN sits and stares, bewildered, at the mechanized versions of the DESTRUCTIX (see S#135)
INSET TWO: on bottom - A high aerial view of the mechanical city growing from the center. (see S# 152)

EGGMAN (positioned near him)
I have enough trouble from that hedgehog without some upstart bothering me.

EGGMAN (close to INSET ONE)
Although he presented himself bearing gifts, stealing my robotization technique is unforgivable.**

EGGMAN (close to INSET TWO)
Then he set my nanites to spreading.*** I was saving those for a special occasion!

EDITOR'S NOTE (small and to one corner)
**also S#135
***S#152 - kinda

PANEL 4: Long, narrow PANEL to cap the end of the page. We see the skyline of New Megaopolis and the six shapes of the SPIDER KIDS nimbly leaping in silhouette. Make sure to show their weapons: katana (sword), si (three-pronged fork thing) nunchucks (sticks on chains) bo staff (duh) pike (staff with a point) throwing stars and rope (show the rope).

TEXT BOX (red - Eggman)
Now that I'm so close to success, I don't need anything getting in my way!

<u>PAGE EIGHT</u>
PANEL 1: CONNERY and SIMIAN duke it out. As SIMIAN pulls back to punch, his elbow painfully connects with the back of DRAGO's head. CONNERY is without his sword. We can see SLEUTH coming up from behind CONNERY, sword still sheathed in his hand.

CONNERY
Varlet! You shall be smote!

PANEL 2: SLEUTH drops into a sweeping kick and knocks CONNERY's feet out from under him. CONNERY topples backwards, flailing.

CONNERY
No - !

PANEL 3: We're on CONNERY's shoulder, looking up. SLEUTH and SIMIAN loom over him, dramatically shadowed due to the point of view. SLEUTH points CONNERY's sword at him.

SLEUTH
Do your jugular a favor as stay down.
How are you doing, Flying Frog?

PANEL 4: FROG stands on the small of MERLIN's back. He has pulled MERLIN's cowl over his head, then tied it closed with his own scarf. MERLIN claws at the air before him. Give FROG a wide, glassy-eyed smile. He's nuttier than a fruit loop, folks.

FROG (add a few musical notes in the boarder so we see he's singing)
Can't cast a spell if he can't take a breath!

FROG (normal balloon)
How's your dinner coming, Predator Hawk?

PANEL 5: TAILS is on the ground, struggling. HAWK has a foot on his chest. HAWK is leaning in, a thin smile on his beak, and his threatening with a taloned hand.

HAWK
All too easy.

PANEL 6: Same set up as before, only we get the fleeting glimpse of HAWK's tail and toes of his boots. We can see the blurred ball of SONIC in a Sonic Spin smashing into HAWK and pushing him off PANEL. TAILS looks up, startled. Feathers fly.

SFX (point of impact - right behind Sonic's spin - to denote the speed of the hit)
SMACK!

PANEL 7: HAWK goes flying and smacks into DRAGO, who staggers back. SLEUTH and SIMIAN look up. SLEUTH looks terrified, SIMIAN grim. CONNERY also looks in the same direction, beaming.

SIMIAN
Get that sword ready, Sleuth Dogg.

SLEUTH
I don't think it'll do me much good, Sgt. Simian.

DRAGO (wavering bubble)
OOF!

SFX (point of impact)
WHUMP!

PANEL 1: Wide PANEL. On the left we have BUNNIE and FROG. He's been tied in his own scarf and kicks and screams while BUNNIE holds him from her mechanical arm. ANTOINE is next to her and is helping up MERLIN, who gingerly touches his neck and smiles thankfully. At center we have SONIC helping TAILS to his feet. SONIC looks towards us with a dangerous, angry smirk. TAILS smiles and rubs the side of his head, wink-wincing as he stands. At right we have FIONA, arms crossed, smirking and raising an eyebrow as if to ask "You thought you could start trouble with us?" Beside her is KNUCKLES, who pounds his fists together and looks all too eager to start fighting.

SONIC
Dude, not much sets me off, but when you go after Tails
You're asking for **serious trouble**!

TAILS
Ah, I'm okay Sonic!

PANEL 2: SONIC and SIMIAN stare each other down with some room between them. Fit in whoever else you can, but don't clutter things up.

SONIC
So - Destructix, huh?

SIMIAN
You heard that?

SONIC
I think they heard you in Furville.
SIMIAN
We can't be the Fearsome Foursome anymore.
There's six of us.

SONIC
Fair enough.
Punching-you-in-the-face time!

PANEL 3: Give at least a third of the page to this fight scene.
Top Left: FROG, still tied, sits in the dirt and looks up sheepishly at a very angry MERLIN, who scowls down at him.
Bottom Left: ANTOINE holds SLEUTH at sword-point. CONNERY twists and holds SLEUTH's arm behind his back, his other hand snatching his sword away.
Top Right: SONIC catches LYNX with a Sonic Spin. As LYNX reacts, the emerald shoots into the air and it caught by TAILS
Bottom Right: FIONA stands atop HAWK's crumpled form and back-hands DRAGO, who crumples backwards.

CENTER: BUNNIE and KNUCKLES launch towards us, mechanical and barbed fists right in our faces - and in SIMIAN's. We see him from the shoulders (barely) on up falling back.

PANEL 4: SONIC stands looking at the pile of defeated DESTRUCTIX. They're all crumped in the foreground. FIONA stands at SONIC's side and they loosely wrap an arm around each other's waists. We see TAILS flying down and returning the emerald to MERLIN in the background.

SONIC
New team name, same old lameness.

PANEL 5: SONIC and FIONA turn as MERLIN pleads with them, emerald in hand. KNUCKLES hooks a thumb to the pile of villain bodies in the background.

MERLIN
Regardless, we must get to King Acorn immediately!

KNUCKLES
Go on. The Chaotix and I will clean up this mess.

PAGE ELEVEN

PANEL 1: ELIAS, SONIC and TAILS watch on as MERLIN casts in the dust. We watch as MASTER MOGUL pointing at the three masks of the ANCIENT WALKERS. There are violent swirls and star-burst in the dust between them.

SONIC
So what's the problem?

MERLIN
Once he was free of the Master Emerald*, Mogul used the last of his strength to wound the Ancient Walkers.
They have been dying every since.

EDITOR'S NOTE (small and to one bottom corner)
*S#79

PANEL 2: MERLIN holds out his hand. The dust falls into his palm neatly. He looks to ELIAS, SONIC and TAILS

MERLIN
If they die, their charm over the emerald with break, and Mogul will be free.

SONIC
Then what can we do?

ELIAS
Since you've come to me, I'm guessing I can help somehow.

PANEL 3: ELIAS takes the focus of the PANEL. He holds the CROWN OF ACORNS in his hands and looks at it, startled. MERLIN points to it somberly.

MERLIN
Indeed. Your crown and its mate, the **Sword of Acorns**, are essential to saving the Ancient Walkers.

ELIAS
The crown? What's so special about it and the sword?

VOICE (Sally - from off-panel)
I can answer that for you, Elias.

PANEL 4: SALLY ACORN approaches ELIAS with MERLIN between then, listening. They take the focus and the background. Framing the foreground, FIONA takes SONIC's hand. SONIC looks over and raises a questioning eyebrow. FIONA smiles sheepishly.

ELIAS
Sally!

SALLY
I dealt with both personally, brother.

PANEL 5: Head shot of SALLY addressing the reader. Her hair flows and melds into the scene of a spiral galaxy. A the opposite end of the PANEL, the galaxy blends into classic Sally (S#51) holding up her hand. It's dripping with a silvery goo with a golden sheen.

SALLY
They were made from a pure sample of the **Source of All - -**
The substance that is was the base material for everything.
They can channel and produce **vast** amounts of magical energy.

<u>Remembering "Ties That Bind"</u>

"Ties" was initially supposed to run later on in the series with an additional two pages of material. Events behind the scenes (more-so than I can reveal here) led to the story being moved about and truncated. The later actually helped the story, in my mind, focusing the intent of the story. That intent was to bring Snively back where he belonged: at Dr. Eggman's side. Snively has shown to be duplicitous enough to play all the roles he's been in, but ultimately he's only looking out for himself. That was the case, at least, until he had family that didn't beat him up and put him down.

Hope presents Snively with a chance to be a moral, even heroic character. For once there is somebody who can conceivably love and understand him since both of them have been victims of Dr. Eggman. Snively's running to Hope (as symbolic as *that* sounds) was meant to show the little weasel did have a heart, that he had been doing something in Knothole outside of tinkering with stuff, and add a bit of a knife-twist to his ultimate betrayal.

Another key point to this story is the costumes. Hope's is purposefully modeled after Dr. Eggman - black bottoms and red top. This, coupled with her construction of the plane, were the remainder of a plot point lost with the original eight-page treatment: Hope is technically gifted like her relations. She may not be to Dr. Eggman or Tails's levels, but she is far beyond most everyone else. One of the things Snively would have observed (through a bit of a racially tinted view) was that the mobians - while accepting - worried she might grow up into the next Robotnik. This was one of the motivations he had to guide her away from the "animals."

The other costume tweak was the much-lauded Eggman-styled suit for Snively. I'm proud to say I did the initial sketches that were passed on to Tracy Yardley. Tracy, as we all have seen, made it look so very, very good. Part of the redesign was intended to cement Snively's move, while the other part was to bring him a little closer to the SegaSonic elements. He's still Snively, but now he fits in a little better visually.

The page selections this month are the first, middle and last. All the requests were honored and I included page three to show some changes Tracy made and a nod to past continuity even I'd forgotten!

TIES THAT BIND

PGS: 6
D.O.S.:
CODE#:
C.C.:

PAGE ONE

PANEL 1 - SNIVELY (see S#152) sits in the Brain Trust Lab of Freedom HQ. (see S#160). SNIVELY looks dejected as he prods at a device of some sort. (If you can make it an "easter egg" or something like a GameCube controller or item box from the games, please do!) In the background we see the largest monitor of the lab and many other smaller ones. There are also a few lighted consoles. Make sure to show these are lit and alive since this will dramatically change later.

Title in top left corner, credits either along the bottom or anywhere you can think of that would be inventive. Please keep in mind there will be a sizeable INTRO BOX that will dominate the top of the page/panel.

> **INTRO BOX**
> Snively Kintobor was once Dr. Ivo "Eggman" Robotnik's chief toady and is one of the few remaining relatives. The other, Hope Kintobor, is a young orphan under the care and protection of the Freedom Fighters. Now, like Hope, Snively lives with Sonic and his friends . . . but for how long?

TITLE: Ties that Bind

CREDITS

Writer: IAN "POTTO" FLYNN
Pencils:
Inks:
Colors:
Letters:
Editor: MIKE PELLERITO
Managing Editor: VICTOR GORELICK
Editor-in-Chief: RICHARD GOLDWATER
Special thanks to: _____ at Sega Licensing

SNIVELY (thought balloon)
What am I doing here?
I don't belong with Sonic and his friends . . .
. . . do I?

PANEL 2 - Long panel - the width of the page. SNIVELY reclines and bows his head, frowning in thought. The background is filled with swirls of blue and black: we're entering into his twisted little mind. There are three INSERTS that are crammed together like old photographs within the memory-swirls.

INSERT 1 - Closest to SNIVELY. Flashback colors
We see CLASSIC ROBOTNIKS (see S#50) and SNIVELY WITH HAIR (see S#43) standing side-by-side and grinning wickedly at each other.

INSERT 2 - Middle flashback. Flashback colors.
SNIVELY (current design) smiles wickedly and is surrounded by four EGG-ROBOs. (two if you're tight for space). See S#54 for the EGG-ROBOs.

INSERT 3 - Final scene. Flashback colors.
SNIVELY looks about uneasily as he's surrounded by as many DESTRUCTIX (see S#162) as you can wedge in there. DO NOT include SCOURGE in the mix.

SNIVELY (thought balloon)
I've always been in league with some "villainous" force
Whether I was the lacky or the leader
I've always been at odds with the Freedom Fighters.

PANEL 3 - SNIVELY looks at a computer monitor and sees HOPE in the Freedom HQ hangar working on a plane. It's not as big or finished as the TORNADO (see S#133 for counter-reference) but it's a nice looking craft all the same. SNIVELY smiles a little.

SNIVELY (thought balloon)
And then there's Hope.

Orphaned - -
- -left behind by her people - -
- - even related to me and **uncle Robotnik.**
And still she's found her place among these animals and is happy . . .

PANEL 4 - Same layout as the previous panel. SNIVELY looks confused as the monitor he was just watching goes blank.

SNIVELY
What the . . .?

PANEL 5 - Long, narrow panel to cap off the end of the page. SNIVELY looks about, alarmed, as the whole lab goes dark.

SFX (ambient, diminishing)
Bvvvvmmm.....

<u>PAGE THREE</u>

PANEL 1 - FREEDOM HQ - Hangar. Wide shot. We see the TORNADO among some saucer-like devices (see S#152). HOPE is working on her own plane. The plane is smaller than the TORNADO but very sleek looking. REMINDER: Hope is in a red top and black overalls. SNIVELY comes sprinting up to HOPE.

SNIVELY
HOPE!!!

HOPE
Snively?

PANEL 2 - HOPE wipes a smudge of grease from her cheek and gives SNIVELY a curious look. SNIVELY puts his hands on his knees and wheezes.

HOPE
Are you okay?

SNIVELY
Just . . . winded . . .
Listen - since you're family . . . I thought . . . I don't know if . . . but you see . . .

PANEL 3 - SNIVELY winces at himself and rubs a hand down the side of his face. HOPE tilts her head, completely confused.

PANEL 4 - SNIVELY rests a hand on the plane. SNIVELY looks tired and defeated. HOPE brightens and looks at the plane affectionately.

SNIVELY
You're building your own plane, huh?

HOPE
Yep!
Sir Charles said I was going to ace my project for the year for sure!

PANEL 5 - Same layout as the previous panel. SNIVELY looks quiet and thoughtful. HOPE gives SNIVELY another curious look.

SNIVELY
It could take you far away from here . . .

HOPE
What?

PAGE SIX

(NOTE: Please leave about 1/5th of the bottom of the page open for the TEASER and INDICA)

PANEL 1 - The Egg Fleet - Egg Whales and Egg Marlins (see S#164) float through the sky. ***(NOTE: That reference may change! - Darkest Storm pt 3)***

TEXT BOX
And so . . .

SNIVELY (thought balloon - free floating)
Snively Robotnik.
I've come full circle.

PANEL 2 - Full body shot of SNIVELY in his redesign. (see Mike or myself). SNIVELY stands aboard the deck of an Egg Whale and looks rather villainous as he smiles smugly.

SNIVELY (thought balloon)
I betrayed my family to work with my uncle.
I betrayed the mobians to help my uncle conquer the world.
I betrayed my uncle to take the world from him and to save my own skin.
Now I betray the mobians again to help my uncle.

PANEL 3 - SNIVELY looks down on the green world of MOBIUS below him from the deck of the Egg Whale. We look down over SNIVELY's shoulder.

SNIVELY (thought balloon)
Thank you, Sonic, and all your friends.

You trusted me and took me in when I needed help the most.

PANEL 4 - We look in on SNIVELY from the outside. SNIVELY smiles wickedly - the most evil we've seen him thus far.

SNIVELY (thought balloon)
Such weakness will not be tolerated in Dr. Eggman's empire.
Run, Hope . . . run.

TEXT BOX
The End

TEASER
We keep gearing up to what will be either Sonic's greatest victory - or greatest loss!
Be back next month when Knuckles and his father discuss the future of the Guardianship!

INDICA